

Testimony Before The Human Services Commission

Distinguished members of the subcommittee, we are honored to appear before you today to speak about the services provided by the Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County (YSB) with DHS revenue. YSB has received funding from DHS since the late 1970s. Through the years those funds have been used to provide home-based services to low-income, multiple-problem families that would be unlikely to go to an office to meet with a counselor.

Rock Island County

- Rock Island County lies in the northwestern part of Illinois, approximately 90 miles northwest of Peoria and borders Scott County, Iowa. The Mississippi River forms the western border of the county and separates the two states of Illinois and Iowa.
- According to the 2000 US Census, there were 149,374 people, 60,712 households, and 39,159 families residing in the county.
- The racial makeup of the county was 85.5% White, 7.5% Black or African American, 0.27% Native American, 1.0% Asian American, 3.8% from other races, and 1.9% from two or more races. 8.6% of the population are of Hispanic/Latino origin.
- The median income for a household in the county was \$38,608, and the median income for a family was \$47,956.
- About 8.10% of families and 10.70% of the population were below the poverty line, including 15.70% of those under age 18

The Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County

- YSB was founded in 1972 to provide services to children and teens at risk delinquent behavior.
- YSB's current population includes:
 - Children at risk of delinquency,
 - Teens returning to the community after being in foster care or residential treatment for abuse, neglect, or delinquency.
 - Students with behavioral, emotional and academic problems who are at high risk of truancy or drop-out.
 - Children and teens identified as gang involved or at risk of gang involvement.
 - Children and teens who have committed a misdemeanor or felony offense.
- YSB services include:
 - Individual counseling for the child or teen.
 - Individual counseling for the parent of a disturbed child or teen.
 - Family Therapy.

Donated Funds Initiative

The contract that DHS will cut on October 1, 2011 is the Donated Funds Initiative (DFI). The funds are Federal Block Grant Funds that are distributed by DHS.

- In FY 11, 201 children and families were served through the DFI contract.
- The median income for a DFI family was 22,251.

Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County
September 21, 2011

- The median income for Rock Island County was \$38,000
- The 2011 Federal Poverty Level was \$22,350 for a family of four.
 - The median sized family served by DFI was 3.88 family members.
 - 56% of the families (and children) served through DFI live below the poverty level.
 - 18% if Illinois Citizens live below the Federal Poverty Level.
 - 25% of children living in Illinois live below the Federal Poverty Level.
- 28% of the children served were African American. African Americans comprise 7.5% of the Rock Island County population.
- 22% of the children and teens served through DFI were Latino. 8.6% if the county is Latino.
- Summary Table:

| | Rock Island County | DFI Families |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Median Income | \$38,608 | \$22,251 |
| Percentage of Families Living Below Poverty Level (\$22,350 for a family of 4) | 18% | 56% |
| Percentage of Children Living Below the Poverty Level | 25% | 56% |
| Black | 7.5% | 28% |
| Latino | 8.6% | 22% |

- All YSB clients are rated for 16 behaviors, conditions or situations that put them at an elevated risk for delinquency, school drop-out and teen pregnancy. In FY 11, DFI clients had an average of 6.67 high risk factors.
 - The most commonly appearing risk factor was youth having favorable attitudes toward antisocial behavior: 57.8% of YSB clients exhibited antisocial attitudes. Four years ago only 37.3% voiced antisocial attitudes.
 - 50.8% of clients in FY 11 lived in an economically depressed neighborhood. Four years ago 45.5% lived in an economically depressed neighborhood.
 - In FY 11, 42.56% of the children in the program had a parent with a criminal history. Four years ago only 28.2% had a history of criminal behavior.
 - 40.76% of clients began exhibiting anti-social behavior before age 11. Four years ago that number was 26.06%.
 - In FY 11, 42% of parents were emotionally distant from their children. In FY 07, 32.91% of parents were similarly distant and uninvolved.
 - 37.5% of the children and teens served in FY 11 engaged in patterns of violence directed at others (patterns not one or two incidents). In FY 07 that number was 23%.

FY 11 Program Outcomes

This summary is based on cases closed between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. In FY 09, 391 cases were closed in the Family Therapy Program. There were 261 service cases with 215 (82%) outcome results. The outcomes describe client functioning in several areas.

- School Functioning:
 - During the time period reviewed, 37 clients were identified as truant or irregular in their school attendance. At the conclusion of services 24 of those clients (65%) no longer exhibited truant behavior.
 - 111 were identified as having academic problems at intake. By the end of services 50 (45%) improved their performance.
 - 118 clients were identified as having school behavior problems. 70 of those clients (59%) improved.
- Family Violence: Fifty-three families reported concerns about physical safety during arguments, 32 of the families (60%) reported that relationship violence was no longer a concern.
- Police, DCFS, Court Involvement: Eleven percent of clients had contact with the police while services were being provided. Five percent of the families served had contact with DCFS after services began. Three percent of the children were removed from the home and placed in foster care, a residential facility, or jail.
- Problem Resolution: The presenting problem, the problem that led the family to seek counseling, was eliminated or the problem was viewed as less severe by 70% of the families responding.
- Goal Development: Eighty-seven percent of the clients served developed goals. Seventy-seven percent of clients reached the goals that they had set for counseling.
- Referrals: Twenty-nine clients were referred for services not provided by YSB (e.g. legal assistance or medical assessment). Twenty of those clients (69%) followed through with the referral.

Agency's Place in the Community

Throughout its history, YSB's mission has been to provide services for hard to treat families, who are less likely than other families to go into a counselor's office for treatment. The Youth Service Bureau is one of the few agencies in Rock Island County that will go to a client's home or school to provide services. The agency has the only Spanish speaking counselor in the County, and is the only agency serving teen gang members and African refugees.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
SENATE

SENATOR
MIKE JACOBS
36TH DISTRICT

September 14, 2011

STATE CAPITOL
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
62706

Illinois Human Services Commission
Springfield, IL 62704

Dear Members of the Commission,

It has come to my attention that the Illinois Department of Human Services is eliminating the \$77,000 block grant used by the Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County who provide no-fee services to our low income families. The negative impact this cut will have on the low income families in my 36th Senate District will be devastating. The agency funding decreased by 37% over the last four years and yet their caseload remained constant. Northwestern Illinois has already suffered the loss of many essential social services to teens and cannot survive further cuts. Our low income children, teens and families deserve better.

The Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County served more than 200 families in FY2011, providing vital services to our children, at risk teens and their families. The Youth Service Bureau has a history of success with its program, closing 391 cases in FY 2009 through their Family Therapy Program and their service cases have resulted in positive outcomes. Those positive outcomes include less truancy, improved academic performance and improved social behavior. There have also experienced positive results in the decrease in family violence and an increase in problem resolution within families. The potential social costs are too high for us not to provide these services. I dare not think where these 200 families may be today if it had not been for the services provided by the Youth Service Bureau. When organizations like the Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County succeed in their mission we all succeed.

For those children and families who desperately need the services provided by Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County I strongly urge you not to eliminate the block grant that is so needed to continue this vital service to our low income families in Rock Island County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Jacobs".

Mike Jacobs
State Senator
36th District

TIMOTHY A. BELL

D.H.S.
Human Services Commission

September 13, 2011

Re: Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County
To Whom it May Concern:

The purpose of this unsolicited letter is to express my support for the **Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County**.

Prior to retirement, I spent 30 years as a high school teacher, the last 25 of which I was a Guidance Counselor at Moline High School. I have served on the boards and held offices of more than 5 various non profits, served one term as an Alderman in Moline, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ years in Township Government, and 2 terms as a Representative in the Illinois General Assembly. In addition, I have served on many different volunteer committees dealing with the youth of our area. In all of my professional and volunteer life I have been actively involved in working with and helping disadvantaged and troubled youth. That is why I volunteered to become involved with the **Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County**.

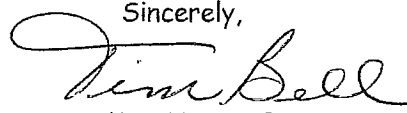
Because of the work done by the **YSB**, the average citizen of our area is not aware of the serious problems in many of the families in our community. Most do not know how large our student population is who come from single family homes, what a large percentage of our students qualify for reduced or free lunches at school, the truancy problems, dropouts, homelessness, abuse, etc. These are the youth, and the families, the **YSB** works with on a daily basis. Their work is confidential, quiet, and effective.

The counselors at the **YSB** work to get the runaways back home, get truants back into school, work with parents on effective parenting skills, and teach the kids the importance of an education and of staying out of the criminal justice system.

I do not believe we could find a more qualified, dedicated and hard working staff of family therapists than are now working at the **Youth Service Bureau**.

Without your financial assistance, I would assume the **YSB** would be forced to reduce their family therapy staff by at least 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ counselors, that would mean that many of the youth and families I mentioned above would not be able to be served. Many of these children would likely end up as dropouts, on the streets, involved with the police and perhaps end up in correctional facilities. Our youth deserve better than that, our community and the state of Illinois need the **YSB**.

Sincerely,



TIMOTHY A. BELL

**ROCK ISLAND COUNTY
COURT SERVICES**

2116 25TH Avenue
Rock Island IL 61201
(309) 558-3703
FAX (309) 558-3738

September 9, 2011

Illinois Department of Human Services
100 S Grand Ave
Springfield, Illinois 62704

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my understanding that the Rock Island County Youth Service Bureau has received a \$77,000 cut in block grant funding from the IDHS. This money is being used by Youth Service Bureau to support counseling services for low income families of our community. These families are already under stress from the economy, now more then ever, they need financial support for services.

Youth Service Bureau has a long history of providing quality counseling services within our community to some of our most troubled youth and their families. The proposed cut in funding would greatly undermine the availability of counseling services to these families and greatly enhance the probability that many of these youth will penetrate into the costly criminal justice system. Now it is very important that these families and there children receive the financial support that DHS has had to offer in the past. In fact, it is my belief that, at some level, this is a pay now, or pay a lot more later, quagmire for the Department.

I wish to conclude with a thank you for your consideration of my expressed views. I understand the budgetary challenges that IDHS is facing and in these times, everyone is in need. However, children and their families should come first. It is hoped that you agree with a reinstatement of funding.

Sincerely,



David E. VanLandegen, Director
Rock Island County Court Services
2116 – 25th Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201
Phone: (309) 558-3702



September 9, 2011

To whom it may concern:

As the Chair of the Esperanza Latino Community Network and the Spanish Speaking Investigator for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, I would like to express my strong support for Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County (YSB) as an agency dedicated to empowering, educating and advocating for the Latino community across western Illinois Quad City Area. Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County in the Quad Cities has partnered with and assisted with establishing the Esperanza: Latino Community Services Network and has been recognized as a leading agency serving Hispanic families with the only bilingual therapist dealing with troubled youth including youth with gang related issues.

For over ten years, Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County in the Quad Cities has provided assistance to the Hispanic community across the Quad Cities with a bilingual therapist. The information, counseling, and advice provided by YSB bilingual staff truly empowers their stakeholders they counsel, by helping them make the best decisions they can for their individual and often families' future. We at DCFS and the Esperanza Network are proud to partner with Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County in the Quad Cities in making the lives of Hispanics that live in their community stronger, and better prepared to overcome obstacles that may hinder their individual, children, and families success.

In light of their essential services, I am proud to support the work of Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County in the Quad Cities, and believe this organization provides an essential and irreplaceable service to individuals, children, and families in our community, in particular to our Spanish speaking families going through crisis. While our Network and Agency and many across the community value the growth, vibrancy and diversity that new immigrants bring, we are also aware that in many cases they need specialized programming, counseling and assistance. Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County in the Quad Cities is an invaluable partner in helping the Quad Cities community meet this need.

If I may be of any other assistance, please call upon me via phone 309.794.3536 or email Hector.Vazquez@illinois.gov.

Cordially Submitted,

Héctor Vázquez, Chairperson
Esperanza: Latino Community Services Network.
DCFS, Rock Island Field Office, Investigator



Rock Island County Court Services

Juvenile Probation Division

210 15TH STREET

ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61201

TELEPHONE: (309) 558-3780 FAX: (309) 558-3365

September 9, 2011

Illinois Human Services Commission
Springfield, IL

To Whom It May Concern:

It was recently brought to my attention that proposed cuts to the FY 2012 Illinois budget included a \$77,000 elimination of a block grant awarded to the Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County.

Rock Island County is a very diverse area of Illinois. The Quad Cities is not only a farming/ agricultural community, but has a very inner city / urban demographic in the low income neighborhoods across the county. We have a vast number of families that receive State services due to their poor economic status. Some of the most vital services provided to these families are through the Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County. Low income families can access counseling services, individual therapy, home-based services and advocacy services that are not available through other agencies or resources. In addition, the Rock Island County Juvenile Court system utilizes the Youth Service Bureau Peer Justice / Teen Court program on a regular basis to divert youth from the delinquency court process. The majority of our youth who have participated in this program have not returned to the court system.

Eliminating these irreplaceable services would be a huge detriment to our community and a significant loss to our low income families.

Sincerely,

Jana C. Haskins
Rock Island County Juvenile Court Services



ROCK ISLAND-MILAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Michael Oberhaus, Superintendent

Tim Wernentin
Principal of RIHS

Rock Island High School
1400 25th Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201
Fax 309-793-5984
309-793-5950 x2000
www.rockislandschools.org

Dear Illinois Department of Human Services Commission:

I am writing to you regarding the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) budget. The Rock Island county YSB received \$77,000.00 last year (FY 2010) which enabled YSB to provide no-fee services to our low-income families.

This year (FY 2011) the YSB funding was cut out of the budget. Therefore, the Youth Service Bureau will not receive any funding from the Department of Human Services causing YSB to charge families for services or possibly eliminate services needed in Rock Island County.

Illinois Department of Human Services block grant in 2010 was used to provide no-fee services to low-income families in Rock Island County. The Youth Service Bureau is the only agency that offers individual, family and couple counseling, group counseling, peer justice, and in-home services for reasonable or no fee. Without Illinois Department of Human Services funding, the Youth Service Bureau will not be able to continue to deliver in the same capacity vital services to the community of Rock Island County.

Sincerely,

Terry Taylor
Dean of Students
Rock Island High School
YSB Board Member

**MOLINE
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 40**

1619 Eleventh Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265-3198 309/743-1600 Fax 309/757-3476 /

September 12, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Sirs:

I am writing this letter in support of a local organization that has been instrumental in providing services to the students and families of Ericsson Elementary School, the **Youth Service Bureau**.

It has come to our attention that the funding may be cut and the services will no longer be available for our families. I am asking that you reconsider that decision. Here at Ericsson School, the Youth Service Bureau, has brought counselors in to work with small at risk groups of young boys and girls. They have also been the agency that we refer families that are experiencing Domestic Abuse, Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Children At Risk/Homeless, etc. Economic times are tough and this is causing more referrals than in the past as more families are seeing hard times because of unemployment. The **Youth Service Bureau** needs to continue to help our families.

Thank you in advance for your reconsideration.

Juanita Terronez

Principal - Ericsson Elementary School

GENESEO MIDDLE SCHOOL
333 East Ogden Avenue
Geneseo, Illinois 61254



Matt DeBaene
Principal

Alex Kashner
Associate Principal

Office (309) 945-0599

Fax (309) 945-0580

Counselor's Office (309) 945-0506

September 8, 2011

Illinois Department of Human Services:

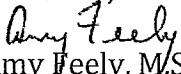
I am writing to encourage you to continue to provide financial support for Youth Service Bureau of Rock Island County. I understand that you may be cutting a substantial amount of grant money that they use to provide no-cost counseling services to low-income families.

I previously worked for Youth Service Bureau and know that many families simply cannot afford counseling. By providing in-home counseling, I saw how little some of these families had and how desperately they needed emotional support and assistance finding resources in the community. I cannot cite research showing how our services made a difference, but heard from the families firsthand how our services had a positive impact on their families. I also saw changes in the children we worked with, who had greater success at school, including improved grades and attendance.

I am now a school counselor and know how valuable it is to have Youth Service Bureau come to our school and provide counseling services to our students. Between myself and the other school counselor, we simply cannot provide counseling services to our 600+ students. Our students benefit greatly from their services.

Please continue to provide grant money to Youth Service Bureau, as they are a necessary and important organization in our community. The number of counseling providers in our area is dwindling and we need a quality organization like Youth Service Bureau.

Sincerely,


Amy Feely, M.S. Ed., LCPC
Geneseo Middle School, School Counselor

Glenview Middle School

3100 Seventh Street East Moline, Illinois 61244
(309) 755- 1919 Fax (309) 752-2564

Jeff Fairweather
Principal

Jeff Evans
Associate Principal

Ralph Hughes
Dean of Students

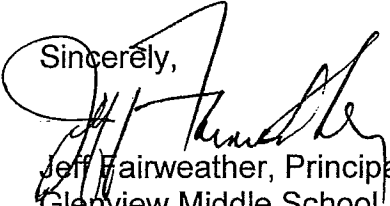
Pat Versluis
Dean of Students

To Illinois Human Services Commission:

As a school administrator I understand that tough decisions need to be made when resources are limited and basic needs must be met. I also understand that during this current economic downturn the need to assist families in crisis is greatly increased. As a school that strives to meet the needs of our students each and every day, I can assure you that the Youth Service Bureau is a key support for our students and families.

During the past three years we have worked with students who have had to deal with mental health issues, the death of a loved one, loss of a home either due to economic distress or disaster, or the trauma of physical or mental abuse. During this same three years our low income population has increased from approximately 55% to 70%. The vast majority of students we see in crisis fall in this category of low income. Without the services provided by the Youth Service Bureau, these students would not only struggle in school, but in life. I implore you to consider these needy students and families as you weigh the tough economic decisions you face. If we are to make a difference in the lives of our students and their families, we need the supports that the Youth Service Bureau can provide.

Sincerely,



Jeff Fairweather, Principal
Glenview Middle School

9/8/11

To whom it should concern:

In times of limited funding and expanding need, it must be difficult to make the hard decisions on how to save money and impact the most families at the same time. You can be assured though that Youth Services Bureau gives a lot of "bang for the buck". You would be hard pressed to find an agency that does more for people in need than YSB.

A typical year for a middle school counselor will include dealing with students whose siblings or parents commit suicide, students who are homeless, students who are kicked out of their homes, students who lose everything in a fire and many other tragic and unforeseeable situations. Imagine doing that alone, because the parents and families are occupied with just surviving. In our school with a poverty level of 62%, counselors can do a lot during a school day, but they need more help at the end of that day. That's where YSB steps in. The student who comes to school beaten up by the world or maybe their parents needs someone else. YSB is that safe place to land.

You represent that 62% of our population. Shouldn't you fund that?

Sincerely,

Gaye Dunn

Glenview Middle School Counselor

3100 7th St.

East Moline, IL 61244

To whom it should concern:

I'm sure that in these troubled economic times it is difficult to make decisions that would impact others. I know that you have probably wondered about Youth Service Bureau and whether or not they could make it without the funds designated to be cut. For this reason, I am writing to you to let you know that YSB is one of the most functional and successful agencies that I know of in our areas. They provide vital services that cannot be found elsewhere in this area AND could not be afforded by most of the population in our area should they have to pay.

A typical year for a middle school teacher will include dealing with students whose siblings or parents commit suicide, students who are homeless and living in cars, students who are kicked out of their homes, students who lose everything in a fire and many other tragic and unforeseeable situations, students coming out of a shelter for battered and abused families. Imagine doing that alone, because the parents and families are occupied with just surviving. In our school with a poverty level of 62%, teachers can do a lot during a school day, but they need more help at the end of that day. We are limited by the contact we have, means we can provide, and tangible helps the families desperately need. That's where YSB steps in. The student who comes to school beaten up by the world or maybe their parents needs someone else. YSB is that safe place to land. They need to have to have agencies that can pick up where we left off. In the evening hours where we don't know what exists under their roof.

In our area 62% poverty is the majority. You represent that 62% of our population. Shouldn't you fund that? Shouldn't we fund something that will help the majority of our people?

Sincerely,

Tracy Greer

GlenviewMiddle School Resource Teacher

3100 7th St.

East Moline,Il 61244

Re: YSB services in our community

To whom it may concern:

Please do not eliminate the block grant that Youth Service Bureau has been utilizing to provide no-fee services to low-income families. As a school community we recognize that struggles students are having at school frequently stem from problems at home. This is one of the few agencies in our area that is able to serve the needs of the whole family---thus making a difference in the lives of our students in many areas (mentally, socially, emotionally & academically). It is critical that YSB be able to continue providing these services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Beverly Osborne

Counselor

Washington Junior High School

Rock Island/Milan School District #41